

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PPT-01 SCA-01 PER-01 A-01 OES-06 AID-05
L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 USIA-06 SS-15
NSC-05 /068 W
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P 170820Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6972

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KATHMANDU 5155

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: OGEN NP
SUBJ: MOFA NOTE REQUESTING WEEK'S ADVANCE NOTICE FOR ALL
TRAVEL OUTSIDE KATHMANDU VALLEY

1. EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED CIRCULAR NOTE FROM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS ADDRESSED TO ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS "REQUESTING ALL
DIPLOMATS TO KINDLY INFORM THE MINISTRY AT LEAST A WEEK BEFORE
UNDERTAKING ANY KIND OF VISITS OR TOURS OF OFFICIAL OR UN-
OFFICIAL NATURE OUTSIDE THE VALLEY OF KATHMANDU". THE NOTE
ADDS THAT "THIS MEANT MAINLY TO ENSURE THAT ALL DIPLOMATS
WILL BE ACCORDED NECESARY COURTESIES AND FACILITIES IN THE
DISTRICTS THEY INTEND TM TOUR."

2. NOTE REFERES TO EARLIER NOTE OF PARIL 9, 1974 WHICH MADE
SIMILAR REQUEST FOR AT LEAST ONE WEEK'S ADVANCE NOTICE BEFORE
UNDERTAKING ANY OFFICIAL OR UNOFFICIAL VISITS OR TOURS OUTSIDE
OF KATHMANDU VALLEY. COMPLIANCE WITH 1974 NOTE APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN SPOTTY AT BEST. SEVERAL EMBASSIES TELL US THEY HAVE NO
RECORD OF THE NOTE AND HAD FADED FROM THE EMBASSY'S
INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY. WE APPEAR TO HAVE SENT IN SOME
NOTIFICATIONS OF TRAVEL IN 1974 BUT FEW IF ANY SINCE.
(PROXIMATE CAUSE OF REISSUE OF NOTE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN
AMBASSADOR MAYTAG'S VISIT LAST WEEK TO SIMIKOT, AS PART OF
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TOUR WITH USAID OFFICERS TO LOOK AT FAMILY PLANNING AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITTIES. TRIP WAS MADE ON SHORT PREPAR-
ATION AND WITHOUT NOTIFICATION TO MOFA).

3. WE DO NOT BELEIVE INTENT OF NOTE IS TO RESTRICT OUR
TRAVEL. HOWECER, REQUEST FOR WEEK'S ADVANCE NOTICE FOR ALL

TRAVEL IS IN OUR VIEW UNREASONABLE AND IMPRACTICABLE. CONSULAR OFFICER, FOR EXAMPLE, MUST TRAVEL ON SHORT NOTICE TO DEAL WITH EMERGENCY CASES INVOLVING AMERICANS, AND OTHER OFFICERS NEED TO TRAVEL AS ESCORT OFFICERS WITH OFFICIAL VISITORS, FREQUENTLY ON SHORT NOTICE. IN ADDITION, REQUIREMENT OF WEEK'S NOTICE WOULD EVEN PRECLUDE ANY SPUR OF THE MOMENT RECREATIONAL TRIP SUCH AS FAMILY PICNIC OUTSIDE OF KATHMANDU VALLEY.

4. WE HAVE EXCHANGED VIEWS ON THIS WITH THE BRITISH HERE WHO SHARE OUR ASSESSMENT THAT INTENT IS NOT TO RESTRICT TRAVEL BUT THAT REQUIREMENT FOR WEEK'S ADVANCE NOTICE IS UNACCEPTABLE. BRITISH ARE REQUESTING GUIDANCE FROM LONDON AND PLAN IN MEANTIME TO NOTIFY MOFA ONLY OF AMBASSADOR'S TRAVEL AND ONLY BY TELEPHONE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS AND GUIDANCE. NOTE WILL IN ALL LIKELIHOOD BE DISCUSSED AT MONTHLY CHIEF'S OF MISSION MEETING IN JANUARY.
MAYTAG

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NNN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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